

## **NOTICE**

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**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Name: Barbara Kurtz

Date Interviewed: 4/27/99

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Tape 10

Project Number 20012

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**Tape FLHP0010**

18:01:04:21

Q:

Ok. First question's really hard. (Laugh) Give us your name and spell it, just so we have it, so we know that we have it right.

A:

Ok. My name's Barbara Kurtz. K-U-R-T-Z.

Q:

Great. And um, first of all let's talk a little bit about your childhood years. Ah, tell us a little bit about your family and where you lived in the early years.

A:

Oh you mean before I moved over there where we were when Fernald came or what?

Q:

Yeah, yeah.

Difficulties with recording and interference from the TV.

18:01:37:18

Q:

Sometimes the mike picks stuff up, you're not really sure why. Just depends on where it's aiming and stuff.

Um, Ok. Yea just give us a little bit of background on before you, before you moved to the farm on Cincinnati-Brookville Road where, where did you live.

A:

Oh, ok. We lived on Wesselman Road in Cleves, well it was Cleves the address, but Wesselman Road ran off of Harrison Pike, and we were right, all you had to do was turn off Harrison Pike and you were almost in our back yard. And then when I was, I guess four or five years old, I can't remember exactly, we moved to Cincinnati-Brookville Road. And that was 1945 or <46. And that's about it. (Laugh)

18:02:18:08

Q:

Tell us about the early years um, in your house near Fernald. What did you all do there?

A:

Well, my father was a farmer. Ah, he ah, raised mostly, he raised sugar corn, he raised a little wheat, he raised field corn, and he had ah shipped grade B ah dairy for dairy farming and he'd take the corn to Cincinnati and sell it. And we ate everything on the farm. (Laugh) Everything, I mean if it didn't grow on the farm you didn't eat it. (Laugh) >Cause he was not, I mean livin' on the farm he was not a rich man. So, that's what we got stuck with.

18:03:03:26

Q:

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Tell us about your house there?

A:

The house? Well, Abe Lincoln could've moved in and he'd have been happy. (Laugh) Because ah, there was no plumbing, there was no heat. In the winter time you, we slept upstairs and you use to run like crazy to get downstairs cause we had what they called a heat trolia. You backed your little butt against it and you got fried on one side and you froze on the other. (Laugh) And you got dressed that way. And then ah there were two rooms, they were the only two room that were heated were the kitchen and the dining room. And we ate in the kitchen, I don't know why we heated the dining room, but that's the way it was. And that was it. The living room, we never even went in at all.

18:03:53:27

Q:

Tell us about your mom and dad.

A:

Geez, I don't know what to say about them. (Laugh) there's nothing...

Q:

What did your, how did your dad, ah I mean did he get up early, did he get up and farm early (Response: Oh yea) How did that all work?

18:04:12:22

A:

He got up early all the time. He worked like crazy. He was a hard, very hard working man, very, very hard. I mean everything he did, I mean he had two tractors and that was it. If he had to bail hay somebody had to come in with a hay bailer. All that stuff. I mean he ah he did everything by hand. Even before, before they had ah hay bailer, before they hired somebody, he use to pitch the hay into the mound with a pitchfork by himself.

18:04:43:01

A:

So he's a tough old bird. (Laugh) And my mother was a homemaker, she canned anything that ah he couldn't sell at market. She canned the corn, she'd can, we raised tomatoes. He raised ah red beets, ah, lima beans, string beans, all that stuff and she'd can it all summer. So I mean that's, till she got older, then she kinda quit all that stuff.

18:05:09:21

Q:

Tell us about your brothers and sisters.

A:

Geez. Well, I got two older brothers which I don't see and I got a sister (laugh). And she was born 15 years after ah, I mean she's 15 years younger than I am. And ah, that's about all I can tell you about >em. (Laugh)

18:05:34:26

Q:

Describe your childhood on the farm. What was that like?

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

A:

Oh. Well, there was a few jobs you had to do and stuff. But, ah all in all I guess it wasn't that bad. Not the way today's kids get raised, I guess we didn't have it that bad because we were needed.

18:05:58:14

Q:

What did you do for fun out on the farm?

A:

What did I do for fun? Well I had a dog and I had a swing. That was about it. (Laugh) I use to teach the dog all kinds of tricks. And the dog was very smart. And I use to fight with my brothers. (Laugh) And then my sister came along and she was like a little doll. So, I had a lot of fun with her, cause I was 15 when she was born, I thought she was the greatest thing to ever come around. (Laugh)

18:06:34:04

Q:

Um, tell us a little bit about the years when they were building the plant. Well actually first of all, let=s talk a little bit about the eminent domain question. Do you remember, you were about 15, or how old were you when they built the plant?

18:06:52:10

A:

Oh, about 10 or 11 years old when they, ah when I found out that they were going to take the property next door to us. You want me to tell about (Response: yea, tell us about that) Well, we, my father was friends with the man next door to us. His name was Clayton Cone. And they exchanged work every once in awhile and stuff.

18:07:15:07

A:

So, we went over there one day, I remember to visit him. And he was telling about that they were coming to take his property and he just couldn't get over that, that they were taking his place. And I don't know how many years he had been there and everything and he just thought the world and all that place. He had, it was a beautiful farm, you could've put it on, on ah I don't know if you know what Horde=s Dairyman Farm Magazine, but it would have fit on there.

18:07:39:01

A:

It was beautiful. I mean the buildings were well kept and everything. So he took us into this horse barn, what he had, and it had this ah little bitty ah apartment in it. And this little apartment had the, had the plumbing, it had ah, you know it had the heat and everything and it was so pretty. And it had this little kitchenette and everything and my mother used to cook on a wood stove. So I thought man, this is living. This guy=s got it made. And this is just a horse barn and they=re taking this place away from him. I'm thinkin' boy I'd really love to live here. (Laugh)

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

18:08:13:27

A:

But I remember him, he kinda had big tears in his eyes >cause they were taking it. And he didn't want to go and he was gettin' older and he thought he'd spend the rest of his time there. He only had a daughter, he couldn't pass it on, but I guess he figured you know, she got married, it would go into, cause it, his ah his, it was either his father or his father-in-law lived on the place and he lived in that little apartment.

18:08:38:21

A:

And he, I guess he had inherited that farm from them, I don't know, I mean I was too young of a kid to know that stuff. But it was a really beautiful farm. And then he went ah, some place in Cincinnati. And they said he died about two years after that, that they said he was so broken hearted about it. But I mean I don't know if that's true, that's just what I, we heard.

18:09:04:16

Q:

When the construction started, did they use some of his buildings do you know?

A:

I don't know. I do know they left the house up, what he lived in, for a very, very long, it was a small house. I mean it, it was, I don't know how many rooms it had in it because I can't remember. But it was a small house, but it was, you know it was a nice house. I mean there was only three in the family, I mean so they didn't have to have a huge thing.

18:09:28:12

A:

But ah, they left the house up I know for years, it sat there. I don't know if it was some kind of guard house or whatever that they did with it. >Cause we weren't supposed to go on the property, you weren't supposed, you could only go so far.

18:09:43:13

A:

Oh. I forgot to tell you, this is a good one, you might enjoy this one. (Laugh) My father, like I said he farmed there, he raised field corn. Well they put signs on our side of the fence that said no trespassing. No trespassing allowed. Guess what they did.

18:10:00:02

A:

I don't know, they use to patrol the fence like we were gonna jump over and wanted to get over there with >em, I mean like (laugh) yeah sure. (Laugh) So ah, they use to climb the fence and pick his field corn cause they'd take the end rows off of it and he said man they must have been dumb cause that was field corn. He don't know what they did with it they should have been smart enough to go find the sugar corn (laugh) (dog on lap growled)

Q:

So they were eating the field corn?

A:

I guess. (Laughter) You can eat the field corn at a certain stage. But I mean it's not that good.

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Q:

Yeah, it's kind of woody.

A:

But, but he said, he said they use, use to go along there, and you could see where, you know they'd take the end rows off.

18:10:41:10

Q:

That's wacky. Um, tell us, tell us a little bit more about the years they were building the plant? What was that like with the construction?

A:

I don't remember much about the construction. I can remember more when it opened. You know, that there was an awful lot of traffic. We couldn't, 8:00 o'clock in the morning you couldn't, I mean a little bit before 8:00 or 7:30 you couldn't get out of the driveway. And when 4:30 came, you sure as heck couldn't get out of the driveway cause they were anxious to get out of there. I guess I can see why now. (Laugh)

18:11:09:20

A:

But they really roared passed there. There even was one, I don't know what he did, he worked over and I don't know if anyone ever told you, but he tried to commit suicide and drove into somebody's house down in Venice, Ross I guess it is now, we use to call it Venice. And some little kid had been sleeping there five minutes before and he got up, and he went through the picture window or something or other and tore up the house pretty bad.

Q:

And that was a Fernald worker?

A:

Yeah. He tried to commit suicide I guess.

Q:

Does anybody know why?

A:

No. (Laugh) I don't know if it had something to do with working there but it did happen.

18:11:51:01

Q:

That's the first time I've heard that story. That's interesting. I'll have to ask a couple of other people if they remember that. (Laugh)

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

A:

I don't remember what year, I guess I was in high school when that happened. I guess in the <50's somewhere in the late <50's.

Q:

Wow. Um, so what purpose did you and your friends think the plant served at the time that they were building it and when they first opened it.

18:12:14:29

A:

We had no idea really what it was. We always calling it the Atomic Energy Plant cause everybody started calling it Fernald, and I'm thinking well where's the heck is that? You know, they use to, Fernald it's over there, you know, on Cincinnati, where is that, I never saw it. (Laugh) so we, that's not what we called it, Atomic Energy Plant. And we did know, you know that they did something funny over there, but we didn't know what.

18:12:40:21

A:

And they were, I mean nothing was ever talked about or anything it wasn't in the newspaper. So I mean, it was just there. You did, I mean during the day as a kid I'd watch the place and occasionally there would be big puffs of white smoke coming out of these like big chimney things. (Laugh) and then, sometimes it would come out really black and it looked like they were burning the place down.

18:13:09:05

A:

So, I mean you kind of wondered what the heck was going on. And I guess as I got older the ah started telling you it had uranium and stuff over there. And then the neighbors used to talk to my father and they use to tell him you know, that if they decided to bomb over here that you know what's gonna go first don't you. Cause that place has got something in there that they really worry about. So he use to tell >em that he didn't give a damn whether it blew up or not. (Laugh)

18:13:38:02

A:

He said it wouldn't do him any good cause he couldn't run that fast, and he said with the stuff that would come out of it you'd be half dead anyway, so you might as well blow the first time. >Cause they kept telling him you know, you ought to build a bomb shelter and all that kind of stuff and which was, he was right really. If they would have done anything, even if the place, you know I could never figure out why they never had any evacuation thing or anything, you know where they get rid of the neighbors. But they never did tell us anything about that. You know if something did go wrong, if it did go wrong, I guess they just kind of buried it.

18:14:11:08

Q:

How did you feel about the safety of your family while you lived right next door?

A:

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

I never really worried about it then. It's, you know, I mean when you're a kid you just accept this stuff, it's there. You know. You don't think about it. But, but, but the part that did scare me was, ah I went to a Catholic school and these nuns use to tell us about the Chinese were coming over and getting us and all that kind of stuff and so I figured you know, if all our neighbors kept saying they were coming to bomb, I mean they're coming to get that place you know, so I'm a dead duck.

18:14:43:03

A:

So when you're a kid, I mean, you think uh, survival, I'm the only one that's gonna survive, I've got to live. So when I was a kid they had ah, in <50, <50 I guess <52 the Korean War broke out, and they use to, you know, there were more planes went over and there were these, Harrison had that little airport over there.

18:15:02:04

A:

So some of those little planes would come over. Well, I knew they were coming over to dive bomb me. (Laugh) So, I use to go down in the basement and hide, you know. Then I'd follow my mother around and she got to the point where it drove her nuts. (Laugh) She'd keep, why are you chasing after me all the time? And I thought well, I can't die by myself you've got to be there.

18:15:23:27

A:

(Laugh) So I mean it did kind of make you a little crazy, but as you got older you realized that it=s not that bad. But when I was, you know, ah, I guess from about 10 or 11, until about 15, I'm thinking yeah, they're coming.

Q:

Wow. Do you want to take a little break?

18:15:45:03

Q:

Um, that's great. >Cause I've always wondered what that would be like. (Response: What?) Just living next door like that while they were building it and while it was there and gosh.

A:

Yeah, but when you're a kid you don't, you don't think a lot about it. But after, after that war started and you know, the nuns, I went to a Catholic school and they kept telling you, you had to go home and pray the Chinese don't come over and I don't know why in the hell the Chinese were coming, but they were coming. (Laugh)

18:16:10:15

Q:

Were you aware that there was a, I had just heard this myself, that there was sort of a defense set up for Fernald, where there were missiles up in Oxford and all that? Were you, your family aware of any of that?

A:

No. No. That's the first time I've heard. What was, what was that for? In case they did come over?



**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Q:

I guess it was for the defense of Fernald. I don't know, I talked to a different interview and he was telling me that their, that their family was aware that there was a defense system, a whole set of missiles set down in the ground.

A:

No kidding. Man, I was a sittin' duck. Wasn't I. (Laugh) I was closer than what I thought.

Q:

That's what Anita said when I mentioned that to her. Did a lot of people have bomb shelters?

A:

No. I mean you gotta realize this was a farming community, these were older people. My father, it seems when this thing came when I was 10 years old, lets see he was in, my sister was, (cough) he was in his late 40's. So I mean, they, they kinda of, you know when you get a little older you kinda just accept, you know what's gonna happen. Like at my age I mean, I just kinda, you know, eventually the times gonna run out and you're pushing up the daisies. So what. (Laugh) When you're a kid though it, you know, it affects you a little bit different.

18:17:30:22

A:

So, I guess, I mean the farming community they, they just kept on going. I mean I guess some of >em were scared. But ah we weren't real friends, my father was friends with a lot of people >cause he exchanged work back and forth, but my mother was a close person to home, so she didn't make a lot of friends or anything. So I didn't know about a lot of people or anything.

18:17:51:09

A:

And we never talked about it at school. I mean it was just there. Nobody really paid that much attention to it because they didn't think, you know it was that bad. I mean, you know just living next door to it you kind of looked it over occasionally. I mean when the smoke would come out it scared me, I thought what, are they gonna blow up or what was gonna happen to >em.

18:18:12:19

A:

>Cause I'd go in the house and tell my mother occasionally, you know what was going on over there. And I don't know what they did because it didn't happen all the time. You know, if it would have been a constant, you'd have thought, you know that's the way it's supposed to be. But it would just happen occasionally so I don't know what they did.

18:18:30:26

A:

What they were burning up over there. I mean, maybe it was another ah, \_\_\_\_\_ or something for all we knew what they were doing. And you didn't question it because it was the government and you know, I mean with the government you don't mess with >em. (Laugh) You keep quiet.

Q:

Do you remember seeing very many officials? Coming in and out of the plant?

18:18:53:20

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

A:

No. I, like I said it just was there, you didn't pay any attention to it. We didn't associate with any of the people, we didn't know anybody that worked there, we didn't know anything. I did go over and try to, when I got out of high school, I went every place else to apply for a job, and I thought well shoot, I'll just go there and check it out. I mean, it's not blown up yet, what the heck. If it's gonna blow, I'm right on top of it so what difference did it make.

18:19:19:00

A:

So I went over and applied for a job and they told me, I did well on the test and everything, but they didn't have an opening at the time and they'd contact me, well I found a job in Evendale so I went there and I never did checked back with >em.

Q:

Did you work at GE?

18:19:33:13

A:

I worked at Avco Electronics. You know Avco Broadcasting, we were part of them. Now they=re gone.

Q:

I remember them though. Wow. Um. What kind of myths or legends have you heard about the plant?

18:19:50:26

A:

Not much of anything. I mean it's not, really I, that I paid much attention to it. I read in the newspaper, you know afterwards, when I read in the newspaper, it scared me, you know more at this time than it did when I lived next door to it. Because I'm thinking, you know if I lived there that long, what did it do to me. What kind of an effect did it have on me. And the worst part what did it have, what did it do to my kids or my grandkids

18:20:18:00

A:

Is there something that I'm carrying that they will get. You know the kids all used to laugh at me cause before we got cable I could walk past the TV and make lines in it. (Laugh) Now, I don't know whether I'm highly electric or whatever. But they used to laugh about it, there's mom, she's in front of the TV or close to it. And it would just make, you know all kinds of little lines in it. So I, I don't know what the heck.

Q:

Do you know now what the plant did?

18:20:47:17

A:

Not really, they refined something or other, at least that's what I understood. And they stored uranium there, that's about it. I don't know what they did, what their purpose was. I guess they were supposed to be making stuff or holding stuff for a bomb. That's the only thing I ever understood. What did they do?

Q:

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

They refined uranium there.

A:

OK. And uranium it not good for ya. (Laugh)

18:21:14:22

Q:

Yeah, it's ah. (Shuffle of papers) Um, let's talk a little bit about, did you, what kind of contact did you have with plant workers. Did you or your family know any of the plant workers?

A:

No. We didn't, I don't remember anybody that I knew that worked there. I mean occasionally you might run across somebody and talk to them and they'd tell ya. But I mean, there was nobody that was ah, that you associated with, that we were real close to that worked there.

Q:

So did, did the workers hang out down in Venice at all or well Ross?

(All laughing.)

18:21:47:20

Q:

I call it Venice too, because I always think of the Venice Castle when I think about.

A:

Yeah, yeah, they ate down there, but I don't know that much about it, you know. See by the time, when I got to be 18 years old, I was kinda of gone most the time, cause I had a job, so I didn't pay that much attention to >em.

18:22:06:27

A:

Like my sister was there all the time. I mean she was born there, practically born there and everything else, so I mean she was more affected by it than I was. I just lived you know, at night I was there and that was it. During the day, I don't know what when on. After I got to be 18 I never paid that much attention to >em.

Q:

How did ah, living in such close proximity change your family's farm, do you think?

18:22:37:18

A:

(Laugh) Well, we lost a lot of money on account of it I'd say. Or either that or else my mother was too dumb to sell it when she could have. I don't know. But there was ah, she had, had put it up for sale I don't know for how much, and after this came out, right before this came out she put it up for sale and after that came out she didn't have too many people bidding on it.

18:23:06:11

A:

They kinda of wanted, I mean, would you want your house right next to it. They=re cleaning it up, uh-

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

ah, sure. (Laugh) That's like cleaning up dust, where do you go with it, it keeps coming back. So I don't see how they can ever clean it up. If that stuff has leaked all over and everything. I don't know what it can do.

18:23:28:21

Q:

Tell us a little bit about, um, you've probably read in the papers or heard about it on the news, what happened when, I think it was about in 1984 when they came out with the news that there had been a dust collector leak out at Plant 9, that had been putting uranium out into the atmosphere. Do you remember that (Response: Oh yeah) What was your response at that time?

A:

Well, I have a son, he's 27 years old and he stayed down at my mothers, I guess for oh maybe three weeks when he was really a small kid. He was born in 1971, so I'm thinking you know this kid, if there's a disease out there this kid will find it, I mean it doesn't have to find him. I'm surprised he doesn't have AIDS, he can get it by osmosis the way this kid is. I mean it's just there, anything. He's had a disease called hemakshimipurpia (phonetic spelling). How many people get that. He had pneumonia, he's had bronchitis, I don't know what all, but I mean it's just, it kind of worries me. And I have a daughter that it's, something like my sister's kid that she had all kinds of problems and we took her to all different kinds of doctors and never could never figure out what was the matter with her.

18:24:50:07

A:

So finally, she kind of just grew out of the problem. I don't know if it's related to that or not. So last year I'm thinking, OK, I'm having this little problem where I'm discharging blood. So I finally decide I'll go to the doctor, you know, this is not cool, you're not supposed to bleed like this. So I went to the doctor, he tells me well we'll take you to the hospital and we'll run and check you out. Well he finds this little polyp in the uterus and he tells my daughter, he said, you know we have to remove that.

18:25:22:22

A:

But he said but you don't have to worry 99%, she's OK. OK, so I come home after they take the little biopsy thing, and I think I'm cool you know, 99% there's no sweat on this thing, I'm thinking why do I even want to go back to this dude. He's telling me I'm supposed to come back, they're going to give me the results. Why should I waste my time. So my husband says you go, go find out.

18:25:43:19

A:

I come in the office and he's going to put me in the exam room and then he says I want to take you into my office and we're going to have a little talk and I could just see his face fall and I thought, oh shoot (ha, ha). We're not talking little 99% chance here, no we're talking 99% chance sure. He said that thing showed up with cancer in it.

18:26:06:29

A:

He said the best thing we can do is give you a hysterectomy and make sure you're OK. So I'm thinking, well I don't need the stuff anymore (ha, ha), might as well go for it, you know, so I mean what was the chances 99% chance am I that unlucky. But, uh, that worries me you know, either, is it hereditary, I

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

mean nobody, my mother didn't have it, my grandmother didn't have it. Is it something in the environment or am I just unlucky. I mean, I don't know, like I said, we ate everything down there, we drank the water out of the cistern. My stupid brother when they wanted to test it, he filled it up with sand so they couldn't find out.

18:26:51:28

A:

So I don't know if they could ever test that. But we drank the water, we took baths in it, washed off with it, everything. Washed our clothes in it. I don't know, I mean, did it reach that far. Maybe it went the other direction, who knows. But after they start telling you that about all that dust and everything and about how much came out. It must have been a heck of a lot of it, it had to float somewhere.

Q:

Wow, um, I'm just going to ask you a general question and you can cover whatever you want. Has the Fernald Plant affected you and your family's life? You and your family and your extended family, your sister, your mother, your father, your brothers?

18:27:54:22

A:

I don't really know if it's affected or not. Nobody really knows that. I mean it would, they run, she takes, my sister takes all these tests and goes into this program where they're checking you out and everything and telling you this and that and everything else. I just don't go for that, I don't like seeing a doctor unless I absolutely got to.

Q:

Are you on the medical monitoring program or did they ask you to be?

18:28:21:00

A:

No, and they never asked me. Yes, I think they asked me but I didn't want to do it.

Q:

Why?

A:

Why? Because I think it's all a bunch malarkey, you can find something wrong with somebody no matter what you do. And you know, I think truthfully, I like sticking my head in the sand like the ostrich and (ha, ha) if I don't know it's there it can't hurt me and I don't want to know it's there. I didn't even want to know I had the cancer, it scared me. I got to thinking you know this is the end, I still have a kid that's 17 years old, a son, and I want to see him at least get through college to see what he accomplishes with his life.

Q:

How's your health now?

18:29:06:17

A:

Ok, I have diabetes, I have slight high blood pressure, and like I said I had cancer and I was supposed to

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

go back in March I think for a check up but I never went. And I guess I will go eventually if I get enough guts to (ha, ha).

Q:

What are your impressions of the work that=s going on right now at Fernald? We talked a little bit about the cleanup. Tell us a little bit more about how you feel about that?

18:29:37:20

A:

Well, how will they clean it up, they're just shipping it off to some place else and somebody else has to be involved with it. And then they ship it through some towns. Maybe one of these trains will get messed up, somebody will hit it with a truck or something or other and it=s spread all over somebody else. So what is the point of it, why move it, why don=t they just clean it up there and store it there and have it over with. Because they already messed up one amount of property instead of shifting it around and dumping it off on somebody else.

18:30:07:13

Q:

How do you feel about the plant=s work now, looking back, um, they were pretty much refining uranium there and it was for the defense of the country, you know that=s what they say, so um, how do you feel about that work that went on?

18:30:27:14

A:

Ha, ha, well, I think the defense of the country and this whole bit about war and everything else I think it=s all so stupid it=s all such a waste of time in human life. What the heck do they need it all for? Why the heck don=t they figure out how to cure some disease or something or other and learn to be nice to people? I can=t see, I mean just like this thing over there in Yugoslavia or whatever it is, I mean what is the point of it? >Cause I=m not the same religion or I=m not the same whatever ethnic background you are, who cares. I mean, (ha, ha).

Q:

O.K. How did the plant change the surrounding community?

19:01:13:05

A:

Oh, you mean, like I said there was an awful lot more traffic. I mean the traffic increased to probably about 90% compared to what it had been. Um, how did it change the community, is that what? Well it got rid of a nice neighbor. He was a really nice guy, I mean he would help you out and do anything when you needed help. And like I said he owned a little piece of the property that would have caused us to fence a different way. He would have had to made a jog in the fence and run down into a ditch in order to make the fence narrow there because we did run cattle there and he was cooperative and said he didn=t care.

19:02:00:23

A:

He paid the property tax on it and we got used to it. I mean it wasn=t that bit of an area but what difference, I mean it was nice of him, a lot of people might have been picky about it.

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Q:

Why did they want to come test your water? Tell us about that whole episode?

19:02:19:17

A:

Why did they want to come test the water? I don=t, my mother more or less, I mean she was there when that happened and she had moved away from the place and she lived in Hamilton then and my brother was farming and helping her out and he decided, I don=t know if they actually came out to test the water or what, you could have it tested. But he says that since nobody was there, he filled, I don=t know why he filled it with sand. I have no idea.

19:02:52:11

A:

I have no idea whatsoever, but he did a lot of weird things (ha, ha) maybe Fernald affected his mind. Who knows.

Q:

Was he worried about what they might find or ...?

19:03:07:01

A:

I don=t know. I don=t think he was, see he doesn=t have any children or anything. When you, when you have the children, I mean you think more about what this could affect them. I mean, I=m not guaranteed that this is what caused whatever I have or whatever they have or anything. Nobody knows that. But I mean when they start telling you this stuff you start attributing more to what they did than what hereditary might have done to you.

Q:

And tell us a little bit about the sale of the farm. When did your mother finally, was she able to sell the farm?

19:03:50:11

A:

Yes she did finally sell it but she sold it for a lot less than what she had. I think she put it up for \$300,000, I think she got \$90,000 or something like that for it. Which affected us a lot, I mean, with six kids I could have used that money (ha, ha). Especially since they were in college. I guess she could have used it too. But like I said when she left the place she still didn=t have plumbing, she had a furnace by that time and she had a gas stove, propane gas stove.

19:04:22:07

A:

And it kind of you know made you feel sad that she had lived there all that life and didn=t have indoor water. She had to go out to the cistern and get her water, she did the wash, she had to heat the water on the stove. And I guess, I mean she had her choice she could have had the plumbing put in, but I guess she got so used to doing it that way I guess that was her life. The kids used to tease me that I only married my husband because he had indoor plumbing (ha, ha). They=re right. (Laugh)

Q:

So who was usually coming out to look at the farm, I mean were there a lot of people looking at it? When

**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

did she first put it up for sale, what year did she first put it up for sale?

19:05:09:25

A:

I really don=t remember because I was with six kids, I was really more involved in my own life than I was in hers. I mean all of our kids were in different activities and everything and in order to keep them all going we had to run, one of us went in one direction the other went the other direction and we counted them when we got home to see if we had them all there. I mean, you really didn=t have time to really pay attention. I mean she knew what she wanted to do so we just kind of left her alone.

19:05:38:13

A:

But I don=t think she had a lot of people look at it. If they did look at it, they wanted it in different sections and she didn=t want to sell it in different sections because she didn=t want to end up with it, you know, because it didn=t have much road frontage. But now they run roads through property a lot but I don=t know whether since its part of its kind of on a plateau and then it goes down into a valley like whether it was kind of hard to get rid of on that count, I don=t know.

19:06:13:00

A:

They tell me now that Welch Sand & Gravel owns part of the bottom land, I don=t know whether that=s true or not. But they, well she rented it out and then the guy she rented to, uh bought it and then it didn=t seem to bother him that it was close to there, to that.

Q:

Generally, how do you feel having lived in such close proximity to Fernald for so long?

19:06:41:17

A:

Oh, I guess I don=t know whether it affected the people that close or not. It=s a little bit frightening to think about what you may be carrying with you, what you=ve passed on to your kids on that account. But, you know, I mean they all seem to be fairly normal (ha, ha). None of them seem to be, they all had fairly good minds and everything. The only one that seems unhealthy is the one that=s 27 years old and I don=t if that=s my fault or whether that=s Fernald or what it is or whether it=s something hereditary, who knows.

Q:

And how do you feel about Anita=s daughter=s problems?

19:07:34:00

A:

Um, I don=t really want to answer that.

Q:

That=s fine. Do you have anything to add that we=ve forgot to talk about or mention?

19:07:41:12

A:



**FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Transcript**

Um, no. Not that I can think of.